



The First Islamic Mission in UK, established 1913 C.E.

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## April, 2000 C.E. Bulletin

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*April 2000 C.E. Meeting*

Assalamu alaikum

**Venue:** *Dar-us-Salaam*

**Date:** Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2000

**Time:** 3 p.m.

**Topic:** Mothers' Day!

### Our Prophet

We are devoted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). But before we speak of our beloved prophet's life, I want to reiterate some thing. In many parts of the world, the Holy Prophet's birthday is celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. Millions, if not more, are spent on pageants and parades, on decorating streets, on lighting up massive buildings etc in the name of service to Islam. Yet, in the same countries people lack access to sources of education, to health facilities, even to such basic things as clean water and sanitation. I am sure that Allah and His Prophet would prefer that our Muslim brothers spend this money on solving the problems of the poor and the needy. Another fascinating aspect of these celebrations is that those who claim that celebrating the Holy Prophet's birthday is a part of Islam, are also people who take bribes, usurp people's rights, mistreat the weak and the poor, and are themselves full of arrogance and pride. Its a pity that they are so far removed from the character of the man whose birthday they are celebrating. Many will complain that I am using very strong language but I believe the whole thing smacks of hypocrisy.

The right way to celebrate this occasion would be to gather together in meetings. Discuss the objections raised against Islam and the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) and talk about how to answer them. One could also consider ways and means of propagating Islam. People could think about how to reflect the morals and qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in their own lives and become a true embodiment of a Muslim. But these things are too hard for us to do. So we light up buildings, hold marches and sing songs in praise of the Holy Prophet and think that we have done our duty.

We also fail to understand what it is to follow in the Sunnah or the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. In some instances, we emphasize some physical aspect of the Holy Prophet's appearance, such as having a beard and the length of that beard, and think that adopting it would earn us great reward in heavens. If this is what is meant by the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), why do we not follow other aspects. The Holy Prophet slept on a rough bed. Are our beds rough? The Holy Prophet never ate his fill. Do we do the same, or do we stuff ourselves? The Holy Prophet always traveled by horse or camel. Do we do the same? He used swords etc in fighting the enemy. Even the Holy Quran tells us to have ready horses to defend ourselves. Does any one propose that the armies of all Muslim countries should be armed with swords and spears and use horses and camels only! To do so, is to make fun of the example set by the most noble benefactor of humanity. The Holy Prophet and his companions sat on the ground. We do not do so now. Does it mean we are abandoning the Sunnah?

We must understand that, to follow the Sunnah means to apply the lessons we learn from his actions and deeds to every walk of our daily lives, not a mechanical physical observance of what was done. Born an orphan - he showed them how to behave with dignity and honour. An orphan does not have to beg favours from the rich and powerful to become successful. Later on in life, when he became rich and powerful, he set an example of how to treat the orphans. The Holy Quran is full of injunctions telling us that the orphans are our brothers and sisters. The Holy Prophet showed us both sides of the coin. A poor person at the start of his life, he showed that - one does not have to lie or cheat to become successful; the poor do not have to beg favours of the rich; pursuit of money is not the ultimate object of life. Even when he had access to the riches of the whole of Arabia, he continued to live a simple and a humble life. He still slept on a rough bed, still wore the same patched clothes, still did not eat his fill.

Some business people tell us that, if they are to make a profit, they have to be devious. The Holy Prophet became a successful merchant without resorting to dishonesty. **His truthfulness and honesty were legendary earning him the title Al Amin. When the Holy Prophet was Commanded by Allah to make a public announcement of his mission, it was his character that he put before them, as proof of having been chosen by Allah to deliver His Message to humanity.**

He bore all opposition with patience and prayer. For thirteen long years he was persecuted in Makkah. His companions were tortured, they were killed and there was a danger that the

*(Continued on page 2)*

whole Muslim community may perish. When he took his message to the people of Taif, they stoned him with such severity that his boots filled with blood; even then, when asked to curse the town, he refused and, instead, he prayed for them. When persecution failed, his opponents tried to seduce him by temptation. They offered him riches, kingship and the hands of the most beautiful women. **Yet, he did not waver for the tinniest moment in his conviction that the One True Allah had chosen him to bear the final message to humanity.**

When his opponents could not bring him back to the path of his forefathers, they decided to do away with him. Allah informed the Holy Prophet of the plot to slay him. The great Ali, knowing that it probably meant certain death, took the Holy Prophet's place in his bed while the Holy Prophet and Hazrat Abu Bakr slipped away. **So strong was the Holy Prophet's faith in Allah that, when their persecutors arrived at the mouth of the cave where they were hiding, he was still calm. When Hazrat Abu Bakr showed fear, saying that there were only two of them, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: "No, there are three of us. Allah is with us."**

It is easy to set an example of tolerance, patience etc when one has no other choice. But soon after the flight to Medina, the Holy Prophet found himself the head of a community and leader of a city consisting of many different communities. There were Muslim from Makkah (the Emigrants), Muslims of Medina (the Helpers), the hypocrites who had embraced Islam for political reasons and the Jews. The Holy Prophet treated all of them equally. Muslims were not shown any favours because they had embraced Islam, nor were others discriminated against because they had not. When asked not to punish the daughter of an important chief for stealing, he replied: "if Fatima had been caught, I would have meted out the same punishment." Political considerations did

not enter dispensing justice. **It was the example of respect, equality, justice and rule of law without fear or favour that the Holy Prophet and his companions had set, which attracted people to Islam.**

In the matters of state, the Holy Prophet consulted the whole community. Matters were openly discussed and all those present gave their opinion freely. At the end, the Holy Prophet happily accepted the decision of the majority, even if it was contrary to his own, as is shown by the incidents prior to the battle of Uhud. In all matters, he consulted his companions and prayed to Allah for guidance.

In battle, he led his armies personally and engaged in combat. He did not sit at home, praying while others went out to fight. During one battle, the Muslim armies began to give way under enemy pressure. The only person who stood his ground was the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Unafraid, he rallied his troops to victory.

He gave dignity to work and labour. Those who worked honestly, however humble the task may seem, were to be honoured. If ditches needed to be dug to defend Madina, he joined the whole community in undertaking this task. If shoes or clothing needed to be mended, he mended them. If dishes needed to be washed, he washed them. **Honest work was made a matter of pride.**

Lineage, wealth, influence etc were no longer matters of pride. There was no racial superiority. All men and women were equal. It was their deeds or actions which made them superior or inferior to others. **He raised women to the level of equality with men in all material, religious and spiritual matters.** He treated his foster mother with the greatest respect, always standing up to greet her. He showed the greatest consideration and affection for his wives. He removed the idea that the daughter of Eve carried the burden of the Original Sin which made her unclean. He abolished the notion that matrimonial relations were dirty and that the pangs of child birth were a

punishment for all women to endure because of what Eve did.

He even gave animals rights. He forbade overloading of animals used for transport. He stopped torturing of animals for fun. Even when animals were to be killed for food, it was to be done quickly, sparing them pain and distress. It is said that when the Muslim army was marching on Makkah an order went out for the army to move a few yards to one side. People were puzzled by this for their appeared no reason to move the whole army to one side. As they marched by, they saw that a dog was giving birth. They realized that the Holy Prophet had moved ten thousand men to avoid distressing her. On another occasion, the Holy Prophet and his companions saw a woman save the life of a dog by giving it water. The Holy Prophet said: "Today the doors of heaven were opened for this woman." In reply to their enquiries, the astonished companions heard the Holy Prophet reply that he knew that the woman was a prostitute!

When the Muslim army moved on Makkah, the whole of Arabia waited with baited breath. They wanted to see what slaughter will take place in the battle for the Holy City and how the Holy Prophet will avenge years of torture and murder of his near and dear. The City was captured almost without bloodshed. He, the poor orphan driven out of the city, returned triumphant at the head of a mighty army. The world waited as he looked down and surveyed his enemies. There was only one question in every mind - How many will be killed today? The Holy Prophet showed that indeed he was *Rehman tul alaimen*. He forgave all their sins against him, even the killings of his clansmen. Proof, if proof were needed, that the Kingdom of God on earth had been established.

Real Sunnis are the ones who implement in their lives the lessons these incidents teach. **Following the Sunnah** is not about the length of beards and height of garments above the ankle, it is **about emulating the character of the Holy Prophet.**